
OIA BULLETIN

OFFICE OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL ASSISTANCE
(701) 328-2094

SPRING 1999

OIA Name Change Official

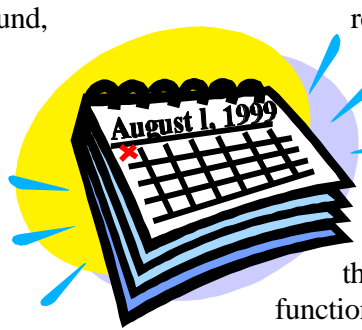
When August first rolls around, the Office of Intergovernmental Assistance (OIA) will be history.

Don't worry – the grants which have been received by local agencies and governmental bodies across the state will still be in place. The only change will be this agency's name.

On August 1, 1999, the Office of Intergovernmental Assistance will be renamed the Division of Community Services (DCS).

The name change was contained in an agency-sponsored bill, and was signed by the Governor on March 5, 1999.

"As a staff, we felt that the old name was confusing, and didn't



really reflect our mission," said OIA Director Dina Butcher. "The new name characterizes the agency functions, and describes its organizational relationship as a division of the Office of Management and Budget."

"In a number of studies, going back to the eighties, management consultants have identified a general customer dissatisfaction with the current name. The public has been confused by the name."

Another staff member commented that it would save a lot of time currently devoted to

painstakingly spelling the current name over the telephone.

Butcher didn't foresee any transition difficulties, since most record keeping is completed electronically, and the office maintains a minimal stock of printed materials.

"In our agency's mission statement, we say that we seek to provide efficient and effective services to the people of North Dakota in the areas of community development, energy efficiency and renewable energy, housing, and self-sufficiency. These services are provided through financial assistance, training, and technical assistance," Butcher said. "That mission will not change, and the new name parallels that mission."

1999 Action Plan Submitted to HUD

On December 23, 1998, the Office of Intergovernmental Assistance submitted to HUD the FY 1999 Action Plan to apply for the state's Federal allocation of Community Development Block Grant, HOME, and Emergency Shelter Grant funds. The state anticipates receiving \$9,992,000 for these programs.

In submitting this Action Plan, the state requested and received permission from HUD to change our program year. This is great news because it will allow the state to award funds before the start of the construction season. Our program year has been May 1 through April 30. It will now change to March 1 through February 28 (or earlier).

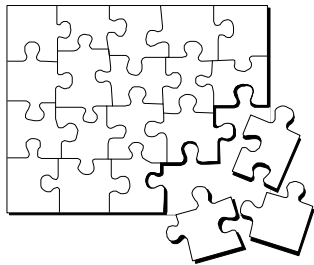
While some of the programs will have already started re-ceiving grant applications prior to receiving notice from HUD of our actual award of funds, we still expect to publish final copies of the FY 1999 Action Plan for distribution. If you would like to receive a copy, please contact Richard Gray at 328-3698.

Governor's Youth Leadership Summit April 11 & 12

Continuing a focus on developing of leadership skills in North Dakota's communities, the Governor's Office has announced a Youth Leadership Summit to be held in Minot on April 11 & 12. This summit is in conjunction with the state Future Business Leaders of America annual conference.

OIA Director Dina Butcher has chaired the effort. She said the summit is an extension of the Leadership North Dakota initiative Governor Schafer kicked off last year.

"We want our young people to recognize how their skills and talents can be applied to community needs," Butcher said. Having been a high school teacher, she recognizes the tremendous potential of North Dakota's youth. "Many communities have 'leadership voids,' with established leaders aging and fewer young people



committing themselves to community service," she said. "We want to engage the next generation in community service now. More importantly we hope by developing

leadership skills and self-confidence in those abilities, that our youth will be lifelong leaders."

The theme for the event is, "Get Connected." In a press release, Governor Schafer said that the goals are not only to help youth get connected with them-selves and their communities, but also the future by identifying and addressing issues of interest to them.

In a letter outlining the organizational details for the summit, Schafer said, "The goals of the summit are threefold: to help North Dakota youth "get connected" with themselves by understanding that leadership starts within; to help youth "get connected" to their

communities by learning how to identify and market their unique skills and talents; and to help our young people "stay connected" to our state's future by discussing and finding solutions to issues they care about."

Presenters will include astronaut Richard Hieb, a veteran of three space shuttle missions and a Jamestown native, and Admiral Bill Owens, former vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and a native of Bismarck.

There will be a modest (\$10) registration per student or chaperone for the summit, which will be held at the Minot City Auditorium. Registration will start at 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, April 11, 1999. Hieb will deliver the keynote address that evening. On Monday, two sessions will be held, with a late afternoon wrap-up.

Further information can be received by calling the Governor's Office at (701) 328-2200.

State Facility Energy Conservation Bonding

The legislature has passed a bill which puts in place a mechanism to provide ongoing funding of energy improvements in state facilities.

Grand Forks Senator Rod St. Aubyn, the assistant majority leader, was the primary sponsor of the bill, SB2312, which creates a process to identify and fund energy improvements at state facilities. Under the bill, this office will work with physical plant administrators and others at state facilities to identify needed energy efficiency

improvements. Any proposed improvements will be analyzed through engineering audits. Detailed cost estimates of the improvements will be determined, along with estimated energy cost savings resulting from the projects.

The Governor will then make this division's report available to the legislative assembly, along with a description of the improvements which he recommends be funded through this process, the estimated costs of each project, the total cost of

the program, and the proposed method of financing the program – either appropriated funds or a bond issue.

If a bond issue is proposed, the OIA will provide an assurance that the energy cost savings resulting from the improvements will be sufficient to equal or exceed the annual debt service from the bonds. The division will also closely work with facility

(continued on page 3)

(Conservation Bonding cont.)

managers to provide any necessary training and technical assistance to ensure the necessary savings are in fact realized.

Bond issues used to finance the improvements will be issued by the North Dakota Industrial Commission's state building authority. Each agency's future utility appropriation will then be reduced by the amount required for debt service retirement. An appropriation of that total amount will then be added to the budget of the Industrial Commission.

"Capital improvements and repair dollars, along with operating repair dollars, are in high demand and compete with a variety of other priorities statewide," said Ray

Boyer, the president of the North Dakota Association of Facilities Managers.

In testimony to the legislature, Energy Program Manager, Kim Christianson, pointed to the depletion of alternate funds for energy conservation work on campuses and other state facilities.

"Bonding for energy-related improvements is a "win-win" situation," he says. "While energy improvements make fiscal sense and provide additional benefits to state facilities, it is often difficult to compete for limited state dollars with other more critical plant needs, such as roof or steam line replacements."

"The energy-related improvements we're talking about have the effect

of permanently reducing the operating cost of the facilities, and therefore reducing the cost of governmental operations."

"This program will finance needed energy improvements in state facilities, and the program will essentially pay its own way."

He says several states have implemented similar programs with positive results. He points to Montana and Iowa, which have both had programs like this in place for a decade. In fact, he says, the Office of Intergovernmental Assistance invited a representative from the Montana Energy Office to discuss this type of program with physical plant administrators and university system business officers prior to the introduction of the legislation.

Leadership Initiative for Community Strategic Planning

What do you want your community to be and look like five years from now? What needs for housing, public facilities, support services, and economic development exist in your community? How do you go about addressing the needs of your community? If these questions are of interest and concern to you as a community leader, then you will most certainly be interested in what is being developed to assist you.

We are seeing communities increasingly struggle to meet local needs with dwindling resources, and in there are fewer and fewer available federal and state resources, so the need to undertake local planning is becoming more evident. Many Federal agencies are once again promoting local planning to justify the award of funds, and the



first recommendation in the Governor's Housing Task Force Report is for communities to undertake planning to access to

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME and Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) funds beginning in the year 2002.

Responding to this need for planning, in conjunction with the Governor's Leadership North Dakota initiative, a number of Federal, state and private agencies have formed the Leadership Initiative for Community Strategic Planning. The Leadership Initiative for Community Strategic Planning Committee's mission statement is:

"The Leadership Initiative for Community Strategic Planning

Committee is a public and private partnership committed to providing each community the opportunity to involve its citizens in developing a shared vision for the long-term viability and enhanced quality of life for the community, and collectively for all of North Dakota. We will accomplish this by developing, assisting with, and promoting a flexible strategic planning process."

It is the intent of this initiative to develop a process that can be used by any community, small or large, to develop technical assistance teams to assist communities in their planning, and to provide communities with training to implement a strategic planning process beginning no later than the summer of 1999.

Community Development Conference

April 22 & 23, 1999

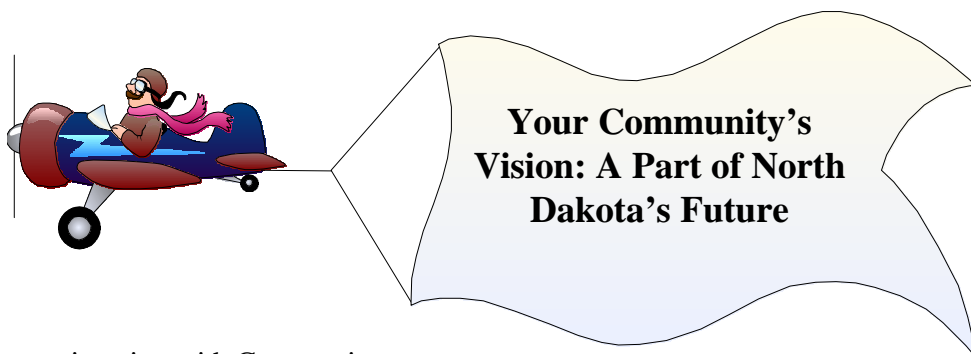
Next month, the North Dakota Planning Association (NDPA), the Office of Intergovernmental Assistance (OIA), and the Department of Economic Development and Finance (ED & F) will combine to sponsor a conference titled

Your Community's Vision: A Part of North Dakota's Future.

The two-day conference will cover various areas of strategic planning, and provide tools for communities to use for that process. In addition, conference organizers say that various community development awards will be presented at the conference.

Conference organizers are encouraging attendance from developers, community leaders, staff from organizations related to economic development and related board members, city and county planners, regional council staff and members, and county officials such as commissioners and auditors.

"Planning is a crucial activity for sustaining development in rural states like North Dakota," said HOME program manager, Michael Spletto. The NDPA has responded to a need for training by beginning an educational series called *"Planning Made Easy,"* which is based on American Planning Association materials. In con-



junction with Community Development Month, the NDPA will offer the second part of that training, focusing on the last two chapters of the manual.

Mark Wyckoff, from the Planning & Zoning Center, Inc., will again present the topics. Mr. Wyckoff's professional career represents a broad range of research, writing, teaching and consulting activity with a wide variety of organizations.

Dr. Richard Rathge will open the conference with the discussion of North Dakota demo-graphics, leading into reasons for planning. Dr. Rathge is the Director of the State Data Center at North Dakota State University.

Dr. David Kolzow will conduct sessions on Community Strategic Planning. Dr. Kolzow is a partner in Lockwood Greene Consulting in South Carolina and was one of the principals in the Enhancement to Growing North Dakota initiative. He's also been involved in target industry programs around the country, strategic planning for

numerous communities and has extensive training experience.

Following his presentation, several communities will discuss the good, the bad and the ugly of planning, and the Leadership Initiative of Community Strategic Planning will unveil the North Dakota Strategic Planning Process.

The conference will also highlight North Dakota's successes in Community Development. Awards for Outstanding Housing (Single Family and Multi-Family), Public Facility and Economic Development Projects, and the BUILD awards will be announced. Nominations for these awards are currently being accepted. Call 328-2094 for information and a nomination form.

The conference will be held at the Seven Seas Inn and Convention Center in Mandan, North Dakota on April 22 and 23. Reservations may be made by calling 1-800-597-7327 or 663-7401. For additional information, please call 328-2094.

“Energy Efficient Mortgages” Topic at Housing Conference

OIA Energy Program Manager Kim Christianson recently moderated a panel at the 1999 North Dakota Housing Conference, sponsored by the state Housing Finance Agency. The panel topic was “Energy Efficiency—Retrofitting Existing Single Family Homes.”

“Frequently, older existing houses are desired because of their affordable nature,” Christianson said. “We were hoping to introduce the idea that buying an energy-efficient home, or making energy-related improvements at the time of purchase, makes the home more affordable in the long run.”

Christianson had arranged for Randy Martin, from the Denver-area consulting firm, R.L. Martin & Associates, to provide the panel with information on energy efficient mortgages. Martin has formerly been associated with the U.S. Department of Energy, the Iowa Association of Rural Electric

Cooperatives, and the Iowa State Energy Office. He currently does web-related consulting for the Energy Efficient Builder Association, RESNET (the Residential Energy Services Network), and other groups associated with energy efficient construction.

He also distributed copies of an 80 page paper, “Financing Energy Efficiency,” which Martin had prepared for the Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities. Christianson said a few remaining copies are still available. For more information please call our office at 328-2094.

Martin made a strong case for the benefits of energy efficient mortgages. For financiers, he noted that mortgages for energy efficient buildings can be more profitable. The mortgage is more secure, he points out, since a buyer will have less continuing utility costs and is less likely to default. The resulting

loans can also be larger, and more people may qualify for the mortgage.

Also on the panel were Keith Elliott, a state coordinator for HUD, who discussed rolling in cost effective energy improvements into a mortgage for a home; and Rory Hoffman of Region VI Community Action Agency’s Weatherization Program, who described the detailed energy audits the agency conducts on client homes.

Discussion followed the presentations as to the nature of the home inspection and the calculation of potential savings resulting from the energy conserving measures. Particular attention was expressed as to how an infrastructure could be developed which could meet the inspection requirements of energy efficient mortgages through some of the federal programs.

State Building Code Updated

In November 1998, all cities, counties, architectural firms and others were sent a copy of the updated State Building Code “Blue Book.”

Effective October 1, 1998, the State Building Code was updated to the 1997 Uniform Building Code (UBC) and 1997 Uniform Mechanical Code (UMC) published by the International Conference of Building Officials. The 1997 UBC consists of three volumes; most communities will need to purchase Volumes 1 and 2. The UMC is one

volume. Copies of the UBC and UMC can be purchased from the International Conference of Building Officials by calling 1-800-284-4406.

This is the last publication year of the UBC and UMC. These codes will be replaced by the family of “International” codes now being developed by the International Code Council. This is an effort of the three model code development groups to develop one set of model codes for the country, instead of having three sets of model codes.

When you call the International Conference of Building Officials to purchase the UBC and UMC, we encourage you to ask about membership and its benefits.

Also, if you or your jurisdiction is not a member of the North Dakota Building Officials Association (NDBOA), we encourage you to join. The OIA helps to underwrite the cost of training made available to all building officials through the NDBOA. If you are interested in joining, contact Mark Lang in Devils Lake at 662-7607.

OIA Hires New Employees

Darin Scherr recently accepted a position as the State Energy Engineer at OIA. He comes from the State Department of Health where he had been employed as an Environmental Engineer for three years with air quality permitting, and air quality compliance. He is a Bismarck native and has a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of North Dakota.

He currently is an Adjunct Professor of Engineering at Bismarck State College, teaching Graphical Communications and Advanced Engineering Drawing using AutoCad (r.14).

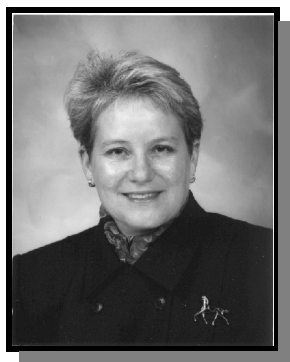


*Darin Scherr
State Energy Engineer*

Krislyn Thompson recently accepted a position as Account Budget Specialist with Office of Intergovernmental Assistance.

She had previously been employed by the North Dakota State Water Commission as an Account Budget Specialist for 14 years.

She is a Mandan native and has a BA in accounting from Moorhead State University.



*Krislyn Thompson
Account Budget Specialist*

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